JEFFERSON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURTHOUSE, BOX H

BOULDER, MT 59632

PHONE 406-225-4025 FAX 406-225-4148

TOM LYTHGOE, CHAIR

CHUCK NOTBOHM

KEN WEBER

PROCEEDING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS COUNTY OF JEFFERSON, STATE OF MONTANA June 8, 2005

Present: Commissioners Lythgoe, Notbohm and Weber; Ben Sautter, Road Supervisor; Harold Stepper, County Planner; Matt Johnson, County Attorney; Rick Abraham, Leita Beardsley, Rick Saunders, Ranay Keller, Jan Anderson, *Boulder Monitor/Jefferson County Courier*, Marga Lincoln, *Helena Independent Record*

MINUTES

Commissioner Lythgoe moved to approve the minutes of May 18. Commissioner Notbohm seconded. The motion carried.

Commissioner Lythgoe moved to approve the minutes of May 25. Commissioner Notbohm seconded. The motion carried.

ITEMS FOR COMMISSIONERS ACTION OR REVIEW

<u>DISCUSS AND DECIDE ON PURCHASE OF DIGITAL RECORDER AND AMPLIFICATION SYSTEM</u>

Commissioner Lythgoe stated that Carl Purdy is still working on a proposal, and this item will be on the agenda of the next meeting.

DISCUSS WHITETAIL ROAD SPEED STUDY AS RELATES TO CITIZEN'S CONCERNS

Commissioner Weber stated that he has left several messages with Doug Bailey, with no response. It is his suggestion that he follow the wishes of his constituents and request to be heard by the traffic commission. He will contact Lee Alt to make the arrangements.

<u>DISCUSS AND DECIDE ON ENTERING INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH GREAT WEST</u> ENGINEERING TO BE ON-CALL ENGINEERING/CONSULTING FIRM

Commissioner Lythgoe stated that they decided to go out for a request for proposal, which has been advertised.

SIGN LEASE AGREEMENT BETWEEN JEFFERSON COUNTY AND ASH GROVE FOR FM RADIO ANTENNA

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Commissioner Lythgoe stated that this is a three-year lease with no money requirements. Commissioner Weber moved to give Commissioner Lythgoe permission to sign the lease with Ash Grove Cement for a non-exclusive leave agreement. Commissioner Notbohm seconded. The motion carried.

RESOLUTION 17-2005 ADOPTING POLICY FOR DISPOSITION OF BODIES IN JEFFERSON COUNTY

Matt Johnson, County Attorney, distributed copies of the resolution, and stated that it is just a draft at this time. Commissioner Lythgoe read the resolution. Matt stated that he had a quasi-committee put together to discuss this issue, consisting of the Sheriff, Clerk and Recorder, Sanitarian and himself. The county has gotten numerous inquires into private burial, which statute does not address. Megan stressed health concerns - water tables, etc. and the Sheriff noted that unknown burials could cause unneeded investigations. These concerns are addressed in the draft resolution. Burials would need to be registered, so that future landowners know that there is a burial on their property. He stated that he understands people's concerns to save their family money, due to rising burial costs. He has checked with other counties, and no one is dealing with this to the extent Jefferson County is. Matt stated that he is hoping for public input.

Ranay Keller stated that she lives south of Clancy and owns her property free and clear. She stated that most of the points in the resolution are valid. She wants to have a private burial to save money. Her original plan was to be cremated, but she is not comfortable with this, and her children would like a site to visit. She cannot afford a burial site. She has written in her will to provide for 100-year care of the grave site. A vault would also be too much money. She was looking over her property, which is 2.56 acres, for a good burial site, but it is in the bottom and she can't get away from the stream and wells. Her neighbor would grant an easement. She stated that she has her will all prepared, but she didn't file it the day she brought it in, because of this issue. Commissioner Lythgoe asked her specifically what she has a problem with. Ranay stated that the vault container is an item of concern. Commissioner Weber asked what type of vault would be required. Matt stated that they are concrete. Commissioner Notbohm stated that he can understand the legal concerns, and felt that a GPS location would be a good idea. Ranay stated that when she spoke with the Sanitarian, Megan suggested that the sheriff come out at the time of burial and GPS the location. Matt stated that a form would need to be drawn up to fill out. Commissioner Notbohm stated that they might need to form a grievance committee to deal with all of this.

Matt stated that if someone already has a grave on site, it will be buyer beware. He noted that there is a lot of case law on access to grave sites, although these private burials would not qualify for classification as a cemetery. If the land changed hands, there is no guarantee of access to graves. He stated that the committee would also like to put together a pamphlet of things to consider when requesting a private burial.

Commissioner Lythgoe asked if it is reasonable to put a 100-year clause in a will. Matt stated that a deed restriction would carry weight. Commissioner Lythgoe asked if the vault is a necessary expense. Matt stated that they all discussed this, and felt that there was a need for a clearly marked site and a vault to allow for removal, if need be. Commissioner Lythgoe asked

what type of vault would be required. Matt stated that this is why this is still a draft; there is more that needs to be researched. Commissioner Notbohm stated that he feels a vault is important. Personally, he feels that burials shouldn't be allowed other than in cemeteries.

Commissioner Lythgoe stated that this will be discussed further at a later date.

<u>PUBLIC HEARING - REQUEST TO ANNEX ADJACENT TERRITORY TO THE</u> MONTANA CITY FIRE DISTRICT

Commissioner Lythgoe called the public hearing to order, stating that the Commission has received a petition for annexation, which has been certified by the Clerk and Recorder. He called for comments.

Rick Abraham stated that the Montana City Fire District is in favor of the annexation. They are trying to get the boundaries cleaned up. He stated that the only thing they would like to see is that Alpine Meadows is assessed the same fee as the existing fire district. Commissioner Weber asked if annexing doesn't automatically do that. Rick stated that they want to assess a fee, which all of the landowners were aware of up front. Commissioner Lythgoe stated that this is not in the petition or the resolution. Matt stated that if the people knew up front, he doesn't have a problem with it, but he will need to do some research.

Commissioner Notbohm asked if the fire department is already covering the area. Rick stated that there are currently only two structures in the area, and they have gotten no calls yet. Commissioner Notbohm asked if there are more parcels out there that are not in any district. Rick stated only the Bompart property and two parcels on Holmes Gulch. The Elkhorn Bed and Breakfast is in the Clancy district, but needs to move, as it is physically closer to the Montana City district.

Commissioner Weber noted that when the adjoining territory is annexed, they will start paying the fire fee, but the fire department also wants an additional fee up front. He asked if the fire department plans to go back out with a letter. Rick stated that he would rather wait to do this if it is not spelled out in the resolution. Commissioner Lythgoe stated that he has a problem with people who have large tracts of land being required to pay \$800-900 per 5 acres. Rick stated that this has gotten to be a backdoor way to do a subdivision without paying fire department fees. If the landowners being annexed in are not going to pay, then the fire department doesn't want them.

Commissioner Lythgoe pointed out that if someone owns 20 acres that they haven't done anything with, they need to pay \$2500 to \$4000 to have fire protection. Rick stated that if the Commission wants to draw the line in the sand that the fee will not exceed \$1000, unless they subdivide and pay at that time, it is okay with him. He stated that the fire department is not out to sting anyone, but if landowners want to buy in and have benefits, they need to pay for them. Commissioner Lythgoe noted that there are about 800 acres up there, and it is hard to get to. Rick stated that the roads have been updated, which was a requirement.

Commissioner Lythgoe asked if the fee can be added to the resolution. Matt stated that it would be best to send out the addendum to everyone; he is not comfortable with adopting something

without sending it out. Rick stated that he is also not comfortable accepting this without the agreement. He stated that he can't believe that it got through without this in there.

Hearing no further comment, Commissioner Lythgoe closed the public hearing.

Matt stated that an addendum to the petition is necessary. Rick asked for a letter from the Commission or Harold be sent to the fire trustees.

DISCUSS AND DECIDE ON BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT RECOMMENDATION REGARDING ZONING THE NORTH JEFFERSON COUNTY

Matt distributed an opinion that he had written. A Planning and Zoning Commission, comprised of the Commissioners, 2 citizens, surveyor (Harold?), and other county official can be formed. The county can open zoning, and can amend sections, with proper notice, posting and public hearings. According to MACo, the county needs to make sure that the proper zoning procedure was followed the first time. The zoning commission has a lot of power. Commissioner Weber stated that it sounds like they can deal with the zoning, but can they deal with it on a partial basis. Matt stated that yes, it does appear that it can be done in a more efficient manner.

Commissioner Notbohm stated that his concern is that the Commissioners not be decision-makers in the process. Matt stated that the Commissioners would be part of the committee, but can be overruled by the committee. Commissioner Weber stated that one of the county employees listed to serve on the committee is a surveyor, and asked if Harold or Bonnie would be closest to this position. Also, to open a can of worms, what if the zoning was not done properly the last time.

Matt stated that the five-year protest period has passed, according to a conversation he and Harold had the previous day. Harold noted that, currently, some lots are half residential and half commercial. Matt asked that the Commission designate someone to gather information that he can review and then meet with the MACo attorney. Harold stated that after he and Matt spoke, he found a good file on the last zoning process that he can get to Matt. Commissioner Lythgoe asked if there were any more questions, and noted that Bruce Suenram and Ken Vivrette were on the previous committee. It was asked if the past committee member are still valid. Commissioner Lythgoe stated that it will need to be researched, but they probably are not. Matt stated that it will be up to the planning committee to decide what will be opened for review. Harold stated that a lot has changed over the year, with variances, etc., and it will be nice to get everything cleaned up.

DISCUSS AND DECIDE ON AMENDMENTS TO COUNTY ROAD STANDARDS

Commissioner Lythgoe stated that this item will not be dealt with at this meeting; it will be on the agenda again July 5^{th} , and will be on for at least six weeks. He asked those in attendance if they had any comments.

Leita Beardsley read a letter from her husband Joe (attached), who was unable to attend. She stated that in regards to Great West Engineering, it seems to be scheming, to have them working

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on the road standards, and entering into an agreement with them for engineering services. Commissioner Weber stated, to go back to the agenda item to enter an agreement with Great West, the Commission has decided to go to the RFP process. Leita stated that she is glad the county is doing that, but she feels that Great West should be barred from bidding.

Rick Abraham stated that the Montana City Fire Department does support the standards, noting they have dealt with the mess that can be left. They approve the standards being upgraded and enforced, but noted that the county also needs some way to hold developers accountable. Addressing Leita, Rick stated that he doesn't understand the conflict of interest charge. The county has no engineer on staff to review these roads, and his fire department has hired an engineer in the past to check out projects.

Rick Saunders stated that, in talking about road standards, what about current roads being held to the standards of 2002. Also, he has heard that the county plans to pave the solid waste sites with hot mix, and asked how this can be justified, if the county has no money for roads. Ben stated that the county has no plans to pave the solid waste sites; there will be some cold millings coming off of the highway, but they will not be doing any paving. Rick stated that this is not what he has heard. Ben stated that if someone has a question, they need to come to him. He noted that there is a lot of hearsay out there, and you can't believe everything that you hear.

Leita stated regarding the conflict of interest, she has no problem with the county using an engineer, as they are necessary at times. However, Great West Engineering is working with Ben in going over the road standards which require engineering. In her mind, this is a conflict of interest. Rick Abraham stated that he is a contractor, and people go to a contractor for suggestions, but he is still allowed to bid on the project. Ben stated that this just makes no sense. If the county goes to an engineering firm for help with the road standard, but they won't be able to work for the county ever again, no one would ever help. Commissioner Lythgoe stated that the county had a relationship with GreatWest through the CTEP process, and they were willing to help with the standards. Commissioner Weber noted that if the county has an engineering firm, it doesn't prevent the developer from hiring whoever they want for engineering services.

Rick Saunders asked if the Commission has entertained thoughts of getting engineers and contractors together to hash this out, or are they going to continue to do things behind closed doors. Commissioner Lythgoe stated that this is why the Commission is doing things the way they are; taking time and welcoming input. A draft document will be drawn up and put out for public review. Commissioner Weber stated that they did think about a committee, but decided that basically, everyone impacted should be involved. They will continue to do this in an open forum, rather than pick four or five people, and let everyone review and comment.

Rick Saunders asked if there is going to be a town hall forum or if the discussion will continue in Commission meetings. Commissioner Lythgoe stated that first, they will be moving the Commission meetings to Tuesday and go to the courtroom. Commissioner Weber stated that he would be willing to attend a forum. Commissioners Lythgoe stated that, hopefully, by the end of July we will have a set of road standards adopted. Leita stated that one thing that would be new and improved would be a uniform starting point for everyone. Commissioner Weber stated that this is being addressed. Leita stated that subdivision roads are on private property.

Commissioner Weber stated that all subdivision roads are public.

<u>DISCUSS JEFFERSON COUNTY ACCEPTING ALL PUBLIC ROADS FOR</u> <u>MAINTENANCE, NOT TO INCLUDE FEDERAL, STATE OR OTHER AGENCY</u> ROADWAYS

Commissioner Lythgoe stated that all the other counties in the state are saying, no, we don't want any more roads. He noted that this discussion will take a long time, but his intent is to try to see if it can be done. Commissioner Notbohm stated that it is not his intent, and he doesn't want this. Commissioner Lythgoe stated that he has considered a county-wide RID, or district-wide RID, but they may need to go even smaller than that. The other issue is that a RID is for a limited period of time, to bring roads up to a certain standard, then a RMD comes into play for perpetuity. He stated that if the county is going to do this, a combination of these two needs to be done. Commissioner Notbohm stated that the Commission has some maps that divide the County, and asked how they came about. Commissioner Weber stated that Lonnie did the maps on his own, for his benefit when he was doing the mapping. Commissioner Lythgoe stated that basically, Lonnie divided the county into eight road districts that could be transitioned into RIDs or RMDs. He stated that his preference is to have larger districts, although some feel that the RIDs should be much smaller, such as Saddle Mountain, South Hills, Pronghorn, and then have the RMD encompass out to Jackson Creek. All funds raised for each RID would be kept separate, and the RID would be approved by ballot issue. Currently, an RID can be formed with 60% approval by petition, but it is a very cumbersome process for those trying to get the RID formed. A legal description of all properties is needed, and the Clerk and Recorder must certify this. Signatures must be obtained. He feels it would be a much easier process if people could go vote, like a regular election. Commissioner Lythgoe stated that this is where the County is; other counties and states are also looking at this, and roads are a huge issue. People pay their taxes, but only a small portion goes to roads. Homeowners associations that are currently paying dues will have their roads taken over, as well as new subdivisions that build their roads to county standards.

Ben Sautter, Road Supervisor, stated that none of this is going to happen without it being paid for, and it isn't going to happen with the current budget or happen overnight. Also, to bring existing roads up to standards, he needs the easements. A mill levy, RID or RMD is the only way the county will be able to fund this. As much as he would prefer to throw a blanket over a district and have a larger area for the RID, that is not going to happen. Also, every dollar needs to be accounted for in the road fund per district. He is optimistic that this can be done. However, whether or not the county gets there remains to be seen. They will just have to present the plan to the public and let them buy in or not.

Commissioner Lythgoe stated that one plus is that there are not a lot of existing RIDs in Jefferson County. This reason an RID/RMD makes sense versus a mill levy - with a mill levy only a small portion goes to roads. With an RID, all the money goes to roads. An engineer will come up with an estimate of what money will be needed within the district. The money will go to the Road Department to fix and maintain roads in the district. A lot of people he has talked to are already paying homeowner dues and getting nothing for their money.

Commissioner Weber stated that it does seem like a big bite. His first thought, from public comment, is that county roads need to be to county standards. This is a strong mandate from the public. This would provide service to the public, with no question of where the money is being spent. People can take ownership of the money, and see where their money is being spent. At first he thought they were out of their minds to even consider this, but the more he has looked at this, it will answer the public mandate and provide accountability.

Commissioner Lythgoe stated that an RID is very strict regarding the use of the money. With the RMD, there will be priorities for the money; people need to be aware of what will happen. Commissioner Notbohm stated that he is not trying to be negative, but the first hurdle is that there are three different Commission districts. In the past, each Commissioner was the road foreman in his own district. Suppose some pass and some don't, what if people can't afford the additional amount on their taxes. Commissioner Lythgoe stated that this is the beauty of what he is proposing. The cost in the north end will more than likely be higher than in Boulder and Whitehall. Also, what is great about this is that everyone in the county will have the opportunity to vote; if they choose not to do this, that is their choice. He feels that some might hesitate, but when they see it working in another area, they will want to join. Rick Abraham stated he understands the concept, but the reverse is also true. People in the South Hills are paying taxes and getting no service. He challenged the Commission to have a road in the county that has the traffic that South Hills Road Drive, that isn't a county maintained road. Commissioner Weber stated that he doesn't think they will allow anyone to suffer, noting that he gets plenty of road calls from all districts. Commissioner Lythgoe stated that part of the problem is just what Rick said, money is going to roads, and a huge number of people feel they are not getting anything for their money. With the RID, people will be paying more, but they will get service.

Rick Saunders stated that Ben said that the County can't always get a 60-foot right-of-way, so they can't bring up to standard, but that is for the County Attorney to address. Commissioner Lythgoe stated that the County Attorney and MACo both agree that the County has a 60-foot right-of-way on all county roads. Rick stated that a mill was mentioned. Commissioner Lythgoe stated that this may not be an option, as it would not generate enough money for the road department to make a difference. They need the RID so that all the funds stay with the roads. Rick asked if it would go to all voters, or just those in rural areas. Commissioner Lythgoe stated that the RID would cover a smaller area, maybe three subdivisions that are close together, and everyone in that area would vote. The RMD may cover 3 or 4 RIDs, that would need to vote in the RMD.

Commissioner Weber stated that this is still in the hypothetical stage. The Commission is trying to figure this out and are taking comments. "No more roads" is a bad stance on the part of the County. Commissioner Lythgoe stated that there are a lot of non-maintained county roads. Rick Saunders asked if the Commission has given any thought to disparity, such as the little old lady that can't afford her meds. If this gets voted in, what will happen to her. Commissioner Lythgoe stated that this will be no different than with a mill levy; they always hear this argument, but if the majority of the people votes something in, everyone has to deal with it.

Commissioner Notbohm stated that he still want to say in all this process, they need to remember

that when the county was formed, the majority of the population was in Whitehall. There was nothing in the north end. The statement that complaints on roads are county-wide is not true; 90% of the calls are from the north end. His district and Commissioner Weber's district have roads that need to be rebuilt. If this passes in the north end, service will suffer in the central or south districts, if not passed there. Commissioner Lythgoe stated that the service will be the same. Commissioner Notbohm stated only if staff is available. Commissioner Lythgoe stated that staffing is a part of this.

Ben stated that in regards to right-of-way, when he first came in, it was pretty clear that the county has a 60-foot right-of-way on our roads. However, he has not had a lot of support in going out and taking that right-of-way. It comes down to money. Fences are 35-40 feet apart, there are utilities in the easement. The question is who pays to move these. He has been called a bully, been assaulted when he tried to cut trees in the right-of-way, among other things. That they are having this conversation now goes back to listening to the public. He needs to give credit to the current crew that they will do what needs to be done when it comes down to it. Rick Saunders stated that utilities in the right-of-way are moved at the expense of the utility company. Ben suggested that Rick tell that to the utility companies.

Commissioner Lythgoe stated that Ben does have the support of this Commission to get the right-of-way. Fences are moved at the expense of the landowners. This is not popular, but if they are going to bring county roads up to standards, it needs to be done.

Commissioner Weber noted that the County is not kicking anyone out of what they currently have; they are going to maintain at least at the current level, which is a great effort of the crew's part, and maintain and improve where they can. Commissioner Lythgoe stated that he has to compliment Ben. Since he has been here, the Road Department has run more efficiently. He takes his job seriously, and his motivation is what is best for the County. As far as getting the best bang for the buck in the Road Department, if they are going to make improvements, they need to do something extra.

Leita asked if the fees would be the same across the board. Commissioner Weber stated that they don't know at this point, it will be decided by district. Commissioner Lythgoe stated that his thinking is that it will be higher in the north end than in the Boulder or Whitehall area. Commissioner Notbohm countered that he feels it will be cheaper in the north end, since there is a higher density. Commissioner Lythgoe noted that there are so many roads in the north. Ben stated that the study should help determine some of that. It will be more detailed in the north quadrant and more general in the rest of the county.

Jan Anderson stated that it was said that some people are already paying a certain amount of homeowner association dues; if this passes, would that fee go away. Commissioner Lythgoe stated that this would be different from homeowners fees. There is more to those fees than roads, but roads tend to be the focus. In his case, his \$220 a year all goes to roads. If passed, they may still have fees, but they could be used to deal with other issues, such as weeds. This would be up to the homeowners association to decide. Marga Lincoln asked how this would work in relation to Antler Avenue. Commissioner Lythgoe stated that he has no idea at this

CALENDAR REVIEW

6/08 Meet with Bill Hadfield - 4:45

6/09 MACo Economic Development meeting - Butte - 8:00

Tri-County Fire - Helena - 9:30 Elkhorn Working Group - 3:00

Library Board - 6:30

6/10 MACo Economic Development meeting - Butte - 8:00

6/13 JLDC - Montana City - 2:00

COMMISSION REPORTS

SOUTH HELENA INTERCHANGE

Commissioner Lythgoe reported that he met with Jim Skinner regarding the MOA that was signed at the previous meeting. After all signatures are obtained it will go to Peccia. There is a landowner that is causing some problems, and Peccia may need to realign the frontage road as it connects to Colonial Drive.

SALARY COMPENSATION BOARD

Commissioner Lythgoe stated that the salary compensation board meeting held on the 2nd was attended by all involved. Bonnie's base salary was increased by \$1835, to give the deputies a raise. They also increased Bonnie by \$1000 for her assessor duties and \$2000 for election duties. The Sheriff was increased by \$2900 for coroner duties. Matt was taken from \$66,500 to \$76,000. 1% longevity will be granted to all elected officials. They will meet on Monday morning to discuss COLA for elected officials. All other employees will have COLA decided by union negotiations.

MONTANA CITY SCHOOL BOARD

Commissioner Lythgoe reported that he attended the Montana City School board meeting on Wednesday night. He let the board know that Jefferson County would support them if they want to continue with the grant process. However, his personal opinion is that they should sell the property and go elsewhere. He heard that this was a good idea from those in attendance, but nothing from the board.

MEETING REGARDING HIGHWAY 69

Commissioner Weber stated that there was a lively discuss at the meeting held on June 1st regarding moving highway 69. There were many in attendance, and all of them expressed that MDT should not bring the new alternative.

WHITEHALL CHAMBER

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Commissioner Weber reported that he attended the Whitehall Chamber meeting on Thursday. Most of the discussion centered around Frontier Days and the parade, and choosing the Grand Marshal.

CORRESPONDENCE

Commissioner Lythgoe stated that the Commission has received a letter from the DPHHS director regarding a meeting June 29th, and asked if anyone wanted to attend. It is the same time as the Commission meeting. Commissioner Lythgoe stated that he would attend.

A letter regarding a speed zone study request on the Montana City frontage road has been received from MDT. They would like a meeting with the Commission before conducting the study. A meeting will be set.

Commissioner Lythgoe stated that a letter from Scott Mendenhall was received just prior to the meeting. The other Commissioners are aware of the letter, and they need to figure out how to deal with it. The letter protests inclusion of certain statements in the minutes. Commissioner Lythgoe read the letter. Commission Notbohm asked what the purpose of reading the letter into the minutes was, stating that it was only to attack him. Commissioner Lythgoe stated that Scott requested that the letter be read. Commissioner Notbohm stated that he would suggest that Scott hire an attorney if he wants to sue him. He told Scott last year that if he has a problem with something he says to come and talk to him about it, and Scott agreed that he would. Commissioner Lythgoe stated that the Commission adopted a policy that they were not going to make statements against staff. Commissioner Weber moved that the statement does not reflect the position of the Commission, that the Commission apologize and support Scott's work in writing. Commissioner Lythgoe seconded. The motion carried, with Commissioners Lythgoe and Weber voting aye and Commissioner Notbohm voting nay.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Leita stated that she has heard reference to MACo and NACo, but she never hears the Commission refer to the constitution. The US and Montana constitutions deal with property rights, and anything that diminish property rights is not allowed. Commissioner Lythgoe stated that people need to understand that this Commission has not and will not initiate zoning. The item on the agenda today was brought by citizens, and it is being handed back to the citizens.

TOMAS E. LYTHGOE, CHAIR	
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